

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6891
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CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS PORS LA
SUBJECT: INCREASE OF SECURITY FORCES IN VIENTIANE

SUMMARY: SINCE AUGUST 16, THERE HAS BEEN AN INCREASED NUMBER OF ARMED-UNIFORMED PERSONNEL ON THE STREETS ON VIENTIANE. THEY REPORTEDLY INCLUDE BOTH NEW TRAFFIC CONTROL POLICE AND MILITIA TO PROTECT THE FLOOD CONTROL DIKES FROM SABOTAGE BY "REACTIONARY TRAITORS."
END SUMMARY.

1. SINCE AUGUST 16, UNIFORMED PERSONNEL CARRYING M16S OR CARBINES HAVE APPEARED AT STREET CORNERS THROUGHOUT THE CITY. SOME OF THESE APPARENTLY ARE MEMBERS OF A NEW POLICE FORCE SENT OUT FOR ON-THE-JOB-TRAINING TO CONTROL TRAFFIC IN VIENTIANE. RECENTLY THERE HAS BEEN A RASH OF TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS IN THE CITY CAUSED, AT LEAST IN PART, BY YOUNG DRIVERS BROUGHT DOWN FROM RURAL SAM NEUA. THESE ACCIDENTS MAY HAVE CONVINCED THE GOVERNMENT OF THE NEED TO IMPROVE CITY TRAFFIC CONTROL. THEY REPORTEDLY WILL REPLACE REGULAR TROOPS AND LOCAL MILITIA WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY HANDLED TRAFFIC CONTROL, SUCH AS IT WAS, AND WHO WILL NOW BE REASSIGNED TO THEIR MORE NORMAL FUNCTIONS.

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2. THE NEW POLICE REPORTEDLY HAVE ORDERS TO TIGHTEN SECURITY IN THE CITY. PEOPLE HAVE BEEN TOLD IN SEMINARS THAT ANYONE FOUND ON THE STREETS AFTER 2300 WILL BE SUBJECT TO ARREST AND THAT VEHICLES NOT OBEYING CHECK-POINT COMMANDS MAY BE BROUGHT UNDER FIRE. THE POLICE HAVE ALSO STOPPED MOTORBIKES AND CARS TO CHECK VEHICLE REGISTRATIONS AND DRIVER' LICENSES AND IMPOUNDED VEHICLES OF PERSONS WHO PAPERS ARE NOT IN ORDER.

3. ADDITIONAL LOCAL MILITIA HAVE ALSO APPEARED ON THE STREETS, AND THE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN TOLD IN SEMINARS THAT THE CITY'S FLOOD CONTROL DIKES MUST BE PROTECTED FROM REACTIONARY ATTEMPTS TO SABOTAGE THEM DURING THIS PERIOD OF THREATENED FLOOD. THESE FORCES ARE DIFFERENTIAL FROM THE TRAFFIC CONTROL FORCES BY A PATCH INSIGNIA APPEARING ABOVE THE RIGHT BREAST PCCKET.
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Message Attributes

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